

SENECA SPEECH -- J. STROM THURMOND -- AUG. 31, 1946

I am happy to come to the mountain section of South Carolina on the final Saturday of this campaign, and express to you and the good people of the Piedmont my deep appreciation for the fine vote you gave me in the first primary. In Oconee County, I received 2,422 votes while my opponent received only 484. In Pickens County, I received 2,515 votes while my opponent in the present campaign received 1,841.

It has been well said, that as goes Oconee and Pickens, so goes the State. Certainly, such was the case in the first primary when I led my opponent by over 13,000 votes, carrying 28 of the 46 counties, ^{while my opponent led in only 14,} and ~~running~~ second in 15 of the remaining 18 counties.

The first primary demonstrated how the political tide was running. Past political history shows that when a candidate for Governor leads a large field of contenders in the first primary, carrying over half of the counties, and twice as many counties as the second candidate, his election in the run-off primary is sure. The only question in the second primary has been, whether or not the will of the people could be thwarted by the use of a huge political slush fund. It is now apparent to all, including many of the strong supporters of my opponent, that the liquor forces cannot buy this election, and Strom Thurmond is going to be the next Governor of South Carolina.

The people are aroused as they have seldom been before. It has dawned on them that evil influences were at work to ^{defeat} ~~thwart~~ their will and to perpetuate ring rule in our government in Columbia.

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The time has come when the good, home-loving, christian people of this State are going to let the liquor forces know, that they cannot dominate the political life of South Carolina.

Grown rich with their fabulous liquor profits, they set out in the campaign ~~last~~ ^{this} summer not only to capture the Governor's office, but also to elect a legislature which would do their bidding. How many hundreds of thousands of dollars the liquor dealers have spent in this campaign no one knows, but we are going to find out when I become your Governor.

One of my first official acts will be to call on the Legislature for a sweeping investigation of the use of money in this campaign and expose to the public this attempt by the liquor dealers to corrupt our Democratic Primary by the shameful use of money. With the help of the Legislature next January, we will expose this hideous liquor octopus which has its tentacles spread into every South Carolina county, and we will put an end to its corrupt practices.

The Governor cannot make the law, but it is his duty to enforce the law. That, I propose to do. If the Legislature passes a prohibition law, I will sign it. I will approve any law which reduces the consumption of alcohol and which will clean up the liquor mess which exists in South Carolina today. My opponent has not given this assurance to the people of South Carolina.

omit { As Governor, I intend to see that law and order prevail. There will be no abuse of the pardoning power and the will of the courts will be fully respected. I intend to strengthen our law enforcement machinery to the end that our laws will be strictly enforced without fear or favor. The under-world racketeers will receive no mercy from the Governor's office while Strom Thurmond is Governor. }

The people of South Carolina know that I stand for liberal and progressive government. The gains we have made in improving the standards of living for our people must be maintained. We can-
not afford to turn back the clock of progress by reverting to reactionary government.

As Governor, I will give to South Carolina a clean, honest, and business-like administration. My experience as teacher, County Superintendent of Education, Senator from Edgefield, Circuit Judge and soldier will enable me to administer efficiently and effectively the office of Governor during the difficult years that lie ahead in the aftermath of the greatest war the world has ever known.

I was born and reared on a farm, and graduated from Clemson College only a few miles from where I am now speaking. I understand the problems of the farmer, *and will fight to see that he gets an honest deal.* The price of farm labor must be taken into consideration in determining parity payments and farmers must continue to receive parity for their products. Agriculture remains the backbone of South Carolina economy and unless the farmers receive cost of production, plus a reasonable profit, there will be no prosperity in this State. There are many things which must be done here in South Carolina for our farmers.

Rural Electrification and telephone lines must be extended and made available to all our rural homes. All weather farm-to-market roads must be built and improved. Young farmers must be given an opportunity to learn to operate mechanical equipment in order that South Carolina may take full advantage of mechanized farming. The Government must break the bottleneck and meet the farm machinery needs of our farmers before another crop is made.

Community canneries, adequate marketing facilities, freezer lockers, dehydration, processing and storage plants must be built and extended to serve every community. As Governor, I will strive to attain these ends.)

Those who work in our mills and industrial plants must retain the gains they have made in recent years in improving their standards of living. Our State must encourage the development of new industries and investment of out-of-state capital and enterprises here. In bringing new industries to South Carolina, we will do so on the basis of our natural advantages and with assurance that both capital and labor will be treated fairly. I shall never advocate bringing new industries into our State on the theory of cheap labor. Cheap labor never helped any community or any State. Both capital and labor will receive a square deal under my administration.

I shall oppose to the utmost the attempt of the Georgia Power Monopoly, known as Commonwealth-Southern, to scuttle the Clark~~S~~ Hill power, navigation, reforestation, and soil conservation project on the Savannah River. I shall continue to advocate the building of this project by the Federal Government for which money has already been authorized and appropriated. There must be no pussy-footing on this vital issue. I shall fight to have the Savannah River developed by the Federal Government along the lines of the TVA. As Governor, I will resist, and successfully resist, this eleventh hour attempt of this power monopoly in Georgia from robbing the people of South Carolina of the benefits from one of ~~our~~ our finest natural resources. The people have a right to demand that the candidates for Governor state their position on this question without evasion or equivocation. Commonwealth-Southern failed in its attempt to prevent TVA, and ^{I predict} it will fail in its efforts to scuttle Clark~~S~~ Hill.

There are many ^{other} things that must be done for our veterans, among which ^{is} advocate free driver's license, free business license and a reasonable bonus.

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South Carolina is at the bottom of the ladder in literacy. ~~(It is astounding how little we have done to correct this injustice to our people.)~~ As Governor, I intend to do everything in my power to improve and expand our educational facilities. We need more and better buildings, and most important, we need better teaching conditions. Our teachers are overworked and underpaid. As Senator and as trustee of Winthrop College, I made my position plain on improving our educational system, and as Governor, I will be in a position to do many of the things I have long wanted to do to improve our educational system in South Carolina.

An immediate problem is expanding our facilities to take care of the veterans who are now seeking to exercise their educational rights under the G. I. Bill of Rights. This problem will have my immediate attention.

omit The problem of our public health was recently brought home to us with brutal frankness when one-third of our draftees were rejected as being physically unfit for service in the recent war. We must create more health clinics and health centers and build more hospitals. If our State is to grow and expand, our people must be healthy, and the State has an obligation in helping provide the necessary facilities to assure proper treatment of the sick. I will cooperate with the Federal Government in securing for South Carolina its full share of the money authorized by Congress under the Hill-Burton Act for hospital construction.

Time will not permit a further outline of the program on which I have based my campaign for Governor. I have discussed this program on every stump in every county, and the people know where I stand and for what I stand.

That is the reason why some reactionary forces in this State are opposing me in this campaign. That's the reason why the progressive-minded and working people of this state are vigorously supporting J. Strom Thurmond in every county.

There can be no doubt but the real issue in this campaign, is whether South Carolina during the next four years will have progressive government or reactionary government.

I have felt it my duty to call to your attention the fact that my opponent opposed the continuance of Franklin D. Roosevelt in office as President at the very time our allies were seeking to crack the back of the Axis powers. I was a delegate to two National Democratic Conventions and wholeheartedly supported the nomination of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the progressive measures he advocated for our people. I could not attend the 1944 Democratic Convention because I had just landed on the Normandy Beaches by glider with the 82nd Airborne Division and was fighting with the First Army to drive the Nazis out of France.

But, had I been a delegate to Chicago, I would have voted for the renomination of my Commander-in-Chief. The defeat of our Commander-in-Chief at that time would have chilled the heart of every fighting man and would have brought aid and comfort to Hitler and the Axis powers.

My opponent has attempted to confuse the people in regard to his action in 1944 in opposing the continuation of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the White House. The record speaks for itself.

At a meeting of the delegates to the 1944 Democratic Convention, held in the Senate Chamber ^{in Columbia} July 12, 1944, the following resolution was offered for adoption:

"Whereas, since the meeting of the State Convention May 17, his Excellency, The President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has announced that he will accept the Democratic nomination at the Convention to be held in Chicago, commencing July 19:

"Therefore, be it resolved:

"That we the delegates from South Carolina to the National Convention go on record in supporting President Roosevelt for re-nomination.

"It is our belief that in the midst of war and world-wide destruction, no one can serve the people of the United States and the world as well as President Roosevelt because of his intimate knowledge of the military and diplomatic needs of the nation and of the world."

The resolution was passed by a vote of 29 to 4.

✓ Those voting for the resolution were: Senator Burnet R. Maybank, Senator Olin D. Johnston, Governor Ransome J. Williams and 25 others.

Those voting against the resolution were: Dr. James McLeod and three others.

The above is the official record from the Minutes of the South Carolina Democratic Party as furnished by the Secretary of the Party.

My opponent has never held public office and he has no official record by which his political views and philosophies may be judged. But he did make a record as a delegate to the Democratic Convention in 1944.

Franklin D. Roosevelt is dead, but his political ideals and philosophies will live on, just as those of Thomas Jefferson have come down to us through the years.

Handwritten note: *Handwritten* *of* *South* *Carolina* *not* *to* *join*

The eleventh hour attempt of my opponent to inject false issues in this campaign for Governor are fooling no one. His futile attempt to hide his record of opposition to the renomination of our great war President, the late Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1944 Democratic Convention behind a CIO smoke screen will not succeed.

My opponent realized as the campaign drew to an end that the people of South Carolina were aroused against the efforts of the liquor ring to control the political life of this State and he knew the good, honest, home-loving people of South Carolina were going to elect Strom Thurmond Governor next Tuesday and assure this State four years of good, clean, progressive government.

Like a drowning man grasping at the last straw my opponent in his broadcast ^{last} Friday night sought to mislead the people into believing that I am a CIO candidate and intimated that my election Tuesday will be a victory for the PAC and communism in South Carolina.

My opponent is an intelligent man, and when he made these assertions he uttered untruths which reflect no credit on a candidate for public office. He knew that on August 25, the CIO labor leader of South Carolina, in the public press, said his organization was not taking part in this campaign. He knew that in the public press on August 29, I stated I was not the candidate of the CIO or any other organizations group, clique or ring. I am the ^{the candidate of the people as a whole,} people's candidate, and the people know it.

I resent the silly and ridiculous implications that when I am Governor

I will be in sympathy with PAC and communistic policies, especially in relation to racial matters. I come from the rural county of Edgefield, which gave to South Carolina Ben Tillman, Mart Gary and many other great statesmen, and everyone knows how we in Edgefield stand on this question. No man can challenge my loyalty to the ideals and customs of South Carolina. And further no one can challenge my Americanism. I left the security of the Judicial bench and gave my blood on the beaches of Normandy, where I was wounded fighting to preserve democracy, not only in this country but throughout the world. The people of South Carolina know, I am just as much opposed to communism as I was to fascism. I will fight again, if need be, to prevent communism from engulfing this world, and certainly this question has no place in this campaign.

I have based my campaign for Governor on the principles of government for which I stand. This is well known to the people of South Carolina. I have not engaged in personalities. (I did expose to the people, the record of my opponent ~~un~~volting the will of democrats of South Carolina, in opposing Franklin D. Roosevelt at the 1944 Democratic National Convention which was held at the very time the fighting forces of America, of which he was Commander-in-Chief, were seeking to break the back of the Axis powers of Europe.) My opponent has no record of public service, other than his record as a delegate to the 1944 Democratic Convention, when he opposed Roosevelt and supported Harry Byrd. I have no apology to make for bringing this record to the democrats of South Carolina.

The action of my opponent places him unequivocally on the record against those ideals and philosophies, and so much did he oppose them that in the 1944^{national} Convention he worked for the defeat of our great war-time President at a time when the fate of the civilized world hung in balance. A candidate with this record, of course, has the right to ask the people to elect him Governor, but I am sure he really does not believe that the Democrats of South Carolina will elevate him to that high office on such a record. → 7a 478

Now, in conclusion, my friends, I want to urge you not to fail to go to the polls next Tuesday and work to get our vote in the ballot box. We have this fight won. We are going to keep it won. This vote which you rolled up for me in Pickens and Oconee during the first primary, and which is going to be repeated next Tuesday by an even larger majority, exemplifies a wave of sentiment for good government in South Carolina. It is going to roll out of these mountains, across the foothills and on to the sea. We are going to win by a landslide victory and I want you to know that I shall be ever grateful for your support and the confidence you have placed in me.

I can assure you that no group, no organization, no clique, nor no ring will control me while I am in the Governor's office. I will have but one master and that master will be the people. It will be to them and them alone that I owe my election and my every act will be gauged by what is best for them.

In this crusade for good and clean government in South Carolina, right is on our side and right will triumph next Tuesday.